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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000503

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB, EUR/RPM, EUR/PM; JOINT STAFF FOR J5; DIA
FOR DHO-2; SECDEF FOR OSD-POLICY

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [MCAP](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: LITHUANIA WANTS AND DESERVES FLEXIBLE COALITION
SOLIDARITY FUNDING

REF: A. USDAO VILNIUS IIR 6 938 0039 05

1B. VILNIUS 367

Classified By: DEFENSE ATTACHE LTC LARRY BEISEL FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND
(D).

11. (C) Summary. As they gear up to lead a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan, Lithuanian authorities were delighted by the recent approval in Washington of coalition solidarity funding. At the same time, in anticipation of receiving a share of these funds in recognition of their front-line efforts to combat terrorism, they are concerned about possible limitations. In preparation for the PRT, Lithuania is already spending national funds and pulling critical equipment from units with simultaneous NATO missions or national transformation tasks. The Lithuanians would like flexibility in the rules governing the use of solidarity funds in order to optimize the contribution of these resources to the Lithuanian military. End Summary.

12. (C) The GOL was delighted to learn that support funding for coalition members was approved recently in Washington. As reported in Ref A, Lithuania has volunteered to lead a NATO ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Ghown Province, Afghanistan. As a country with limited resources, Lithuania sought early assurances of both NATO and U.S. support. Those assurances directly led to the GOL's agreement to lead the PRT.

13. (C) With the approval of coalition solidarity funding, this Embassy will work closely with Washington and the GOL to ensure that any funding targeted for Lithuania fulfills critical PRT needs. In the initial stages, the Lithuanians have two concerns, which we share. The first is to determine as early as possible precisely what funding will be available to Lithuania and when it will be available. The formation of the base elements of the PRT is already completed, and the actual deployment of Lithuania's PRT support elements has begun. The GOL has already obligated funding to meet PRT needs, and equipment procurement is in progress.

14. (C) The second, and most critical, concern regards the mechanism that will be employed to utilize these funds and the rules that will be attached to them. We understand that reasonable limits will be placed on coalition solidarity funding. At the same time, we want to make sure that efforts to target the assistance to the mission do not have unintended consequences.

15. (C) Ideally, recipients will be able to purchase equipment specifically destined for use in the PRT, as well as to replace equipment that was diverted from other non-PRT units and/or missions in order to fill PRT needs. For example, the GOL's PRT needs rifle-mounted grenade launchers. To fill this need initially, the PRT will take these systems from Lithuania's Special Operations Forces, the only unit in Lithuania with such weapons. In our view, funding rules should allow Lithuania to replace this equipment, which the LitSoF will require to fulfill its NRF-5 and NRF-6 missions. Lithuania is also purchasing PRT equipment with national funds originally earmarked for force transformation, not tied to GWOT uses. It would like to use some solidarity funds to make up for this diversion of resources so that its transformation objective, which accord with our own NATO goals, does not go underfunded.

16. (C) We understand that the mechanism for disbursement of coalition solidarity funding has not yet been determined. We flag these issues now to ensure that the mechanism, when established, not only accords with U.S. interests and law, but also affords our coalition partners the maximum flexibility in the use of funds. This, we believe, will maximize the funds' contribution to U.S. policy objectives, including the importance of keeping Lithuania's multiple obligations to other NATO and U.S.-led operations on track. Mull